

O'Connor (SECOND EDITION.)

EVIDENCE TO CHARACTER;

OR,

The Innocent Imposture :

BEING

A PORTRAIT OF A TRAITOR

BY HIS FRIENDS AND BY HIMSELF.

QUI NIHIL NON LAUDANDUM, AUT DIXIT, AUT FECIT,
AUT SENSIT.

Sir F. Burdett's Speech on O'Connor.

TRANSLATION.

" A man who never uttered a word, or committed an action, or entertained a thought, but what he found some people fools enough to
" admire ! ! "

CASSIUS.—And let us SWEAR—

BRUTUS.—Nay, not an OATH.

Shakespeare's Julius Caesar.

L O N D O N :

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following Extracts from the Testimonies of Mr. O'CONNOR's Friends at Maidstone, and from that Gentleman's Examination before the Secret Committee of the Irish House of Lords, require no Comment, to recommend them to attentive Perusal, and GENERAL CIRCULATION throughout the Kingdom.

Their Authenticity of course cannot be denied.

The Veracity of Depositions, which THE ALMIGHTY was solemnly called upon to witness, cannot be disputed.

Far be it from a generous and unprejudiced Mind, in times of candour and liberality like the present, to impute any other than *the very* BEST of *all possible* MOTIVES, to *any* Word or Action, of *any* Man or set of Men, upon *any* Occasion whatever!!!

But it is, at least, right, that the sober-minded People of this Country should be taught, how liable even those who have been represented as the most RESPECTABLE and MOST HONOURABLE of Men, are to be *deceived*, when blinded by PARTY Prejudices.

It is right, that they should know of every public Man, and especially of every LEADER of a PARTY, and Candidate for Power, not only what Principles he professes, but who and WHAT his *Associates* are.

It is not often, that such Information as this can be obtained for the Public, *from the Parties themselves*, UPON OATH.

EVIDENCE TO CHARACTER.

CHARACTER OF O'CONNOR, BY HIS FRIENDS.

*Extracts from the TRIAL of O'CONNOR, taken in Short
Hand by JOSEPH GURNEY.*

The Hon. CHARLES JAMES FOX, Esq. (SIR.)

Examined by Mr. DALLAS.

Q. DO you know Mr. O'Connor?

A. I do.

Q. How long have you known him?

A. I think it is about four years, but whether three or four years, I do not recollect.

Q. Have you had occasion to see him frequently in the course of that time?

A. It is something more than three years—Frequently.

Q. Have you conversed with him frequently upon political subjects? A. Yes, frequently.

Q. Who were the persons with whom he chiefly lived in this country.

A. He lived principally in the company in which I have the honour to live MYSELF a good deal—he was very much with the leading Members in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, who are sometimes called the OPPOSITION—who are generally in the minority.

Q. Those were the persons with whom he chiefly lived?

A. Principally, as far as my knowledge went.

Q. Did he live upon terms of confidence and esteem with them?

A. I believe *very much*—Certainly with ME for one, *very much*.

Q. Did that ESTEEM and CONFIDENCE continue up to the time, when he *went to Margate* in February last?

A. *Certainly* so with respect to MYSELF.

Q. During the whole course of your acquaintance and of your conversations with him, have you had reason to suppose him a man well or ill-affected to his country?

A. I always thought Mr. O'Connor to be *perfectly well affected to HIS COUNTRY*; I have always considered him to

be a very enlightened man, attached to the principles and the constitution of this country, upon which the present family sit upon the throne, and to which we owe all our liberties.

Q. Have you from your knowledge of Mr. O'Connor, any reason to believe him to be a man of dissimulation?

A. Perfectly the contrary—I should describe him as a man of the OPENEST carriage, one of them, that I know.

Q. Is he cold and reserved, or ardent and affectionate in his friendship?

A. Very ardent and affectionate in his friendships, and TOTALLY WITHOUT ANY RESERVE, I should think as much as any man I have the honour to be acquainted with.

Cross-examined by Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL.

Q. Do you know Mr. O'Connor's hand-writing?

A. I have seen his hand-writing more than once, but I certainly never saw him write.

Q. You mentioned that you conceived the political opinions of Mr. O'Connor, and those of your near friends, to be the same?

A. That was not exactly what I said, but if I am asked now I will answer that question—I said he lived principally with the gentlemen I have described, I believe his general principles were the principles of the constitution established at the Revolution.

Q. Do you know of Mr. O'Connor's being in any manner connected with any of the prisoners at the bar?

A. I never heard of it.

Q. In your conversations with Mr. O'Connor, did he appear to concern himself chiefly with English or Irish politics?

A. Almost wholly with Irish politics.

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN, Esq. (SWORN.)

Examined by Mr. DALLAS.

Q. Do you know Mr. O'Connor?

A. I know Mr. O'Connor *very intimately*.

Q. How long have you known him intimately?

A. I think about three years.

Q. During the course of that time, have you had occasion to see him frequently?

A. *Very frequently* whenever he was in England.

Q. With what description of persons did he chiefly live in England ?

A. I was *particularly anxious* for his society ON ACCOUNT OF HIS CHARACTER, and the recommendations I received respecting him from Ireland. I never met him in any company but in the society in which I live myself, namely, those gentlemen who principally form the Opposition, and in the private society at my house, where I was always *most happy to see him*, and in that society alone, have I ever met with him.

Q. Have you ever conversed with him confidentially upon political subjects ?

A. I think MOST CONFIDENTIALLY, because I treated him, and I think HE TREATED ME, with a CONFIDENCE and UNRESERVEDNESS that might have been expected to have arisen alone from a much longer acquaintance ; but from my opinion of his *principles* and *character*, and such communication that we had, and we did communicate *without the smallest reserve whatever*, upon ALL *political topics* relating to England OR IRELAND.

Q. Is his general character that of frankness and openness in his conversation ?

A. I think IN THE EXTREME.

Q. Did he chiefly concern himself with the politics of England, or with those of Ireland ?

A. I have talked with him upon the politics of both countries very unreservedly, or with the utmost frankness of communication upon political subjects, and the situation of both countries.

Q. About which did he chiefly concern himself ?

A. Respecting the affairs of Ireland, much more, certainly, than those of England ; I have met him in circles where he introduced more the politics of England, about which he seemed not to concern himself ; and I have said, in his presence, and in the presence of other gentlemen that live in our society, that Mr. O'Connor seemed to be occupied with what he conceived to be the oppressions and injuries inflicted upon Ireland ; in which, I beg to add, I agreed with him. He seemed grieved, and afflicted almost, that people in England should think they had any grievances to complain of.

Q. Did your intimacy continue with him up to the time of his apprehension ?

A. Till *within a week*—I think he was at my house

within a week; my INTIMACY continued with him up to that time, and my RESPECT and REGARD for him increased every hour to that moment.

Q. Had you reason to know whether he considered it safe for him to continue in this country ?

A. I had great reason to know the *contrary*, for I took the liberty to ADVISE him not to continue here.

Mr. Dallas. Do you know whether Mr. O'Connor ever belonged to any political society in this country ?

A. I have understood from Mr. O'Connor that he avoided all political societies in this country: and what particularly prepossessed me in his favour, was, that I never met with any man who was so determined in *reprobating the idea of* any party or body of men in this country, under any pretence of grievances whatever, *encouraging the idea of French assistance.* IN MY LIFE, I NEVER MET WITH A MAN MORE STEADY IN THAT IDEA.

Mr. Dallas. Did you ever observe any change in Mr. O'Connor's political sentiments and conduct ?

A. Never in the slightest degree, excepting, if it may be called a change, that I understood, and with regret, that his apprehension of being apprehended and sent over a prisoner to Ireland, put him upon some schemes to get away, his friends very much lamented that he was driven to any such necessity.

Q. Did he continue to live up to that time upon the same footing of intimacy and regard with those friends with whom he had associated before ?

A. Yes, and every one had *the same feelings* with respect to his endeavouring to get abroad by any means that were in his power.

The Honourable THOMAS ERSKINE. (STUDEN.)

Examined by Mr. PLUMER.

Q. You know Mr. O'Connor ?—A. I do.

Q. How long have you known him ?

A. I have known Mr. O'Connor between two and three years, when he was last in England before this time, and I live a great deal with those with whom Mr. O'Connor lives much when he is in this country.

Q. Give me leave to ask who those friends are ?

A. Mr. O'Connor's friends, in this country, are principally those persons who are *MY* friends—Mr. O'Connor

has principally lived with persons of high rank in the public world—Mr. Fox, Mr. Grey, Mr. Sheridan, all that class of gentlemen with whom *I* have acted in public life in parliament, and with many other persons, too many for *ME* to recollect at this moment.

Q. Was that the case, this last time he was in England, as well as upon former occasions?

A. Certainly so; and in consequence of that *I* know Mr. O'Connor's character as well as *I* can be acquainted with the character of any gentleman who lives principally in another country, but whom *I* have seen frequently here.

Q. Shall I beg the favour of you to state what that character is?

A. In *MY* opinion, the best character that any man can possibly possess. *I* have a sincere regard and esteem for Mr. O'Connor, founded upon *MY* opinion and belief that he is a man of the strictest honour and integrity—a man not only capable of, but who has made, great sacrifices to what he thinks right; if there be any more prominent feature in his character than another, as far as *I* am acquainted with it, and *I* am much acquainted with it; it is a noble mindedness, and a high spirit of honor, and *I* therefore feel *MYSELF* not only intitled, but bound upon *MY* oath, to say, in the face of God and *MY* Country, as a British gentleman, which is the best thing any man can be, that he is incapable, in *MY* judgment, of acting with treachery or duplicity to any man, but most of all to those for whom he professes friendship and regard; and *I* do know positively of *MY OWN* knowledge, that he has been in the constant course of professing not merely regard, but admiration and enthusiasm for the persons whose names *I* mentioned.

Q. Did you ever observe any change of that sentiment in Mr. O'Connor towards them?

A. So help *ME* God, never.

Q. As far as fell within your knowledge, did you know that he had any other connections in this country, besides the gentlemen you have mentioned?

A. Upon *MY* OATH *I* had no reason to believe that he had.

Q. Whether you ever observed, during the latter part of the time that you knew him, any difference either upon public or private subjects, between himself and you, or any other gentlemen with whom he associated here?

A. Quite the reverse. Recollecting the station which I hold in the law, I should be little desirous to urge upon the Court any thing that could be at all questionable in point of evidence, otherwise I could, if the Court thought it right, state many instances of his persevering in the same opinions, and in the same regards; this I may say generally, that upon *MY* oath, I NEVER HAD ANY REASON TO THINK THAT Mr. O'Connor's PRINCIPLES AND OPINIONS DIFFERED FROM *MY* own.

Q. Am I to understand that as well upon public subjects as private?—*A.* CERTAINLY SO.

Q. Did you see Mr. O'Connor in the month of January last?—*A.* I did.

Q. Where did you see him?

A. I saw him at *MY* own house.

Q. Did you give him any advice upon that occasion?

A. I not only advised Mr. O'Connor, but urged and importuned Mr. O'Connor, two or three days before the first day of Hilary Term, which commenced the 23d of January, to leave this country any how.

Mr. Plumer. You say you are clear it was two or three days before Hilary Term, which began on the 23d of January?

A. I will not take upon *ME* to speak to the day, but I will take positively upon *ME* to speak to its being before the Term.

Mr. Justice Buller. And you think two or three days?

A. I think so.

Cross-examined by Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL.

Q. Have I taken you right, when I understood you to be sure that the advice was given in the month of January?

A. I am positively certain that it was before Hilary Term.

Q. And I think you have said upon your oath, that you have no reason to believe that Mr. O'Connor had any other connections?

A. I have no reason to believe, so help *ME* God, that he had any other connections.

The Right Hon. the EARL of SUFFOLK. (SITORIA.)

Examined by Mr. PLUMER.

Q. Does your Lordship know Mr. O'Connor?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. How long has your Lordship known him ?

A. It was eleven years ago when I first knew him, or rather later, it was about June or July, 1787.

Q. Has your Lordship known him from that time down to the present ?

A. Certainly, but I have seen him on very few occasions since, and if asked upon that, I can specify the particular occasions upon which I have seen him.

Q. I believe your Lordship was acquainted with him in Ireland, as well as in England ?

A. If the Court will give me leave, I will mention how I became acquainted with him in Ireland, BECAUSE I THINK IT MATERIAL.—I went to my regiment which was at Cork, I went first to Dublin, I was THERE *four or five days*. I *enquired at Dublin my way to Cork*, and the BEST way of going there; they recommended me to go THE FIRST THIRTY MILES *by water*, in a kind of PASSAGE-BOAT, *something* like the style of the Dutch boats, that I should meet with a mixture of company, but with some *very good company*. I had *no* conversation with Mr. O'Connor as I recollect, but chiefly with *Alexander Shortley*; but upon THE DELAY OF THE BOAT, in passing through THE LOCKS, I *walked* BY THE SIDE OF THE BOAT. It took up some time to pass through them, I think Mr. O'Connor overtook me, we entered into conversation, I own I was struck both with his manner which appeared to me extremely gentleman-like, and that kind of diffidence which I have always very much admired in his character; for that has always struck me as a material part of his character. I continued my conversation with him, during the remainder of *my passage*—after we RETURNED TO THE BOAT, I found he was likewise going to Cork, where I was going to my regiment. It was much *my wish*, that he should accompany me there, from what I had seen of him, and in order to induce him to it, I told him, MR. CONNOR, I AM GOING TO CORK, I FIND YOU ARE GOING THERE, AND THAT YOUR FRIENDS LIVE IN THAT PART OF THE COUNTRY, I SHALL BE EXTREMELY *obliged* TO YOU, IF YOU WILL *take the place of my servant* IN MY CHAISE, and in order to induce Mr. O'Connor to do it, I said *you shall pay for* THE POST-HORSE he is to ride; I put it upon that FOOTING, thinking he might otherwise object to it, HE VERY READILY ACCEPTED OF THE OFFER; and *you may suppose*, Gentlemen, that in a communication of three days and three nights, constantly together upon the road, that we

were pretty well acquainted, and a *very friendly communication* it certainly was. I certainly did very much admire that manner which I found confirmed to me from that acquaintance, and likewise those principles which he then had occasion to mention. I remember particularly, that a great part of our conversation was *about Ireland*, of which *knowing NOTHING*—indeed *I was born in it*, but I left it at a very early period of life.

Mr. Plumer. Did your Lordship see enough of his private character and behaviour, to observe whether he was a reserved man, or a man of an open disposition?

A. I certainly saw so much of him, that I HAVE ALWAYS TOLD *Lady Suffolk*, and the rest of my friends, that I had met in that country, with one of the most extraordinary young men I ever had conversed with, both with regard to ability, and as far as I could judge for moral character, for I think I *never heard PURER PRINCIPLES uttered* by any man in my life, he struck me to be at that time about twenty-one, what his real age is I do not know.

Q. Did you observe any marks of duplicity or dissimulation about him or the reverse?

A. I wish to say quite the reverse, and so much so that in the last conversation I had with him two years ago, I wished to introduce him to some of those persons in this country for whose character and abilities I have the highest respect, and if you please, I will mention the gentlemen, *Lord Moira*, *Mr. Sheridan*, the Bishop of Landaff, and *Mr. Serjeant Adair*—They are persons for whom I entertain a particular regard, and you may judge from the MIXTURE, that it was not a political party which I wished to introduce him to; but it was those friends for whom I have a particular respect.

Q. Have you had any reason to alter your sentiments respecting him?—*A.* Quite the reverse, that was the last time I think that I saw *Mr. O'Connor*.

His Grace the DUKE of NORFOLK. (SWEORN.)

Examined by Mr. GURNEY.

Q. My Lord Duke, are you acquainted with *Mr. O'Connor*?

A. I saw him at two different times about two years since.

Q. In what company did your Grace see him?

A. He came to see me one morning, and we had some conversation upon the subject of a speech he had made in

the House of Commons in Ireland; he came to see me from a wish expressed on my part to be acquainted with him.

Q. Did you see him in any company afterwards?

A. I afterwards dined where he did, at the Earl of Suffolk's.

Q. Had you any opportunity, my Lord Duke, of knowing the character of Mr. O'Connor?

A. No further than what might arise from those two occasions of meeting, and general report.

Q. Then from what you know of Mr. O'Connor, what do you apprehend to be his character?

A. I cannot remember the particulars of any conversation, but I consider him as a gentleman acting warmly in the political line, and *attached to constitutional principles*
IN THE SAME WAY AS MYSELF.

MICHAEL ANGELO TAYLOR, Esq. (SWEORN.)

Examined by Mr. GURNEY.

Q. Are you, Sir, acquainted with Mr. O'Connor?

A. I have been acquainted with Mr. Arthur O'Connor, I should think near three years, it was either from the end of the year 1795, or the beginning of the year 1796.

Q. In what society have you generally met Mr. O'Connor?

A. I have generally met him, and indeed my first acquaintance with him commenced in the society of the persons, with whom, in political opinions, I have the honor constantly to act, I mean the society of Mr. Fox, the Duke of Bedford, Mr. Grey, and a *variety* of other most HONOURABLE MEN, with whose political opinions I have ALWAYS agreed, and *shall continue to agree*.

Q. Had you an opportunity from your knowledge of Mr. O'Connor, to know what his political opinions were?

A. I have;—my opinion of his political opinions is, that he was attached to the principles upon which the Opposition in this country is conducted; and I look upon those principles to be the true principles which seated our present King upon the throne, where, I hope, he will long continue.

Q. Did you know Mr. O'Connor, down to the period of his being last in London?

A. I did not know Mr. O'Connor for the last six months during the time he was in England, from an accidental circumstance, I was unfortunately *laid up* with a long illness, or I should most probably have done all I could to have

regained his knowledge, and to have resumed his friendship.

Q. Did you ever know of any change in the political opinions of Mr. O'Connor?—A. None.

Q. Did you ever hear him state any principles at all adverse to the constitution of this country?—A. Far from it.

Q. Any principles favourable to an invasion of this country?

A. From all I know of Mr. O'Connor, and I do declare it most solemnly, I SHOULD THINK HIM ONE OF THE LAST MEN TO PLAN AN INVASION of this country, or to act in any manner basely to it.

Q. Was Mr. O'Connor a man of an unreserved open character, or of closeness and dissimulation?

A. He appeared to be a man of *uncommon* OPENNESS of character, in all the conversations I ever had with him.

Q. What did you conceive to be the nature of his friendships, cold or warm?

A. Exceedingly strong; I can only say, *I beg* to add, that I have looked upon Mr. O'Connor in private life to be a man of the most amiable manners and most honourable intentions.

The Right Honourable HENRY GRATTAN.* (Sworn).

Examined by Mr. GURNEY.

Q. You are acquainted with Mr. Arthur O'Connor?

A. Yes.

* Since this Work went to press, the Report of the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Lords of Ireland, has been received here. The following is an Extract from the Evidence UPON OATH of John Hughes, of Belfast.

“ Neilson took Sweetman’s carriage to Mr. Grattan’s, and brought him along with him.—When they got to Mr. Grattan’s, Neilson told him he had something to say to Mr. Grattan in private, and desired him to take a walk in the domain.—Neilson however introduced him to Mr. Grattan first; and Mr. Grattan ordered a servant to attend him to shew him the grounds.—He returned in about half an hour.—Went into Mr. Grattan’s library.—Neilson and Grattan were there together.—Grattan asked a variety of questions touching the state of the country in the North; how many families had been driven out and how many houses burned by the government or the Orange Men?—Grattan said he supposed he was an United Irishman; he said he was.—Grattan asked him how many United Irishmen were in the Province? he said he reckoned 126,000.—Grattan asked him how many Orange Men there were? he said about 12,000.—Grattan made no particular answer.—Neilson and he left Grattan’s about twelve in the day; they walked to their carriage which was at Enniskerry; he asked Neilson what had passed between Grattan and him.—Neilson evaded the question, but said generally that he had gone down to Grattan to ask him whether he would come forward, and that he had sworn him.—That Grattan promised to meet him in Dublin before the next Tuesday.”—Page 27.

“ Q. You have said that you were introduced to Mr. Grattan by Samuel Neilson at his house at Tinnehinch, in April last—Recollect yourself, and say whether you can speak with certainty as to that fact?”

Q. How long have you been acquainted with him?

A. I have been personally acquainted with Mr. O'Connor since the year 1792; I knew him by character before, but have been well acquainted with him since that time.

Q. Has your acquaintance with him enabled you to form a judgment of his political opinions?

A. Yes, I think it has.

Q. Did you ever hear any opinion from him which led you to suppose he could favour an invasion of his country by the French?—A. No, *rather* THE CONTRARY.

Q. What do you conceive to be Mr. O'Connor's private character?—A. A very good one.

Q. I understand he was formerly a member of the Irish House of Commons?—A. He was.

Q. Were you a member at the same time?

A. At the same time.

Q. Had you any opportunity of knowing whether Mr. O'Connor's character was reserved or unreserved?

A. I think HIS CHARACTER *was* UNRESERVED.

Q. And you have had an opportunity of forming a judgment of what his character really was?—A. *I think I have.*

The Honourable Lord JOHN RUSSEL. (Sworn).

Examined by Mr. GURNEY.

Q. Is your Lordship acquainted with Mr. O'Connor.

A. I am.

Q. How long has your Lordship been acquainted with him?—A. I had the honour of knowing Mr. O'Connor in the year 1796, and this year.

Q. Has your Lordship had opportunities of frequently seeing and conversing with him, and forming any judgment of his character?

A. I have been in Mr. O'Connor's company several times.

"A. I certainly can—About the 28th of April last, I went to Mr. Grattan's at Tinnehinch with Samuel Neilson; on going into the house we were shewed into the library.—Neilson introduced me to Mr. Grattan, and I soon after walked out, and left them alone for full half an hour—I saw a printed constitution of the United Irishmen in the room."

"Q. Can you say whether Mr. Grattan knew it to be the constitution of United Irishmen?"—"A. I can—for he asked me some questions about it.—He asked me also a variety of questions about the state of the North—When we were going away, I heard Mr. Grattan tell Neilson that he would be in town on or before the Tuesday following; and I understood from Neilson that Mr. Grattan had visited him in prison; and on our return to town, Neilson told me he had sworn Mr. Grattan."—Page 28.

Neilson, however, upon *his Oath*, denies having sworn Mr. Grattan, or having said that he had done so,

Q. What has your opinion been of his opinions and character?

A. I have always had a very high opinion of Mr. O'Connor's principles and character; I conceive his principles to be the same as those which have always guided my own conduct, to be in favour of a sound, rational, and constitutional liberty.

Q. Did you ever discover in Mr. O'Connor any sentiment favourable to an invasion of this country by the French?—A. *Never.*

Q. Did Mr. O'Connor live in habits of intimacy with the same persons as your Lordship?—A. He did.

Q. Was that the case during his residence in England, in the present year?

A. Yes, I have been in his society three or four times in the present year, always in the society of *those persons*.

Q. Was Mr. O'Connor received and treated on the same terms of intimacy and regard as he had always been by those persons?—A. Yes, he was.

The Right Honourable the Earl of THANET. (Sworn).

Examined by Mr. GURNEY.

Q. Is your Lordship acquainted with Mr. Arthur O'Connor?—A. I am.

Q. How long have you been so?—A. I was acquainted with Mr. O'Connor about three years ago.

Q. In what society has your Lordship generally known him?—A. I have generally known him in the society of *my friends*.

Q. Will your Lordship have the goodness to state who they are?

A. Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grey, Mr. Francis, Lord Robert Spencer; generally those persons who are in the Opposition in both Houses of Parliament.

Mr. Garrow. That need not be repeated by every witness; when asked if he has seen the prisoner, it will be taken for granted that it was in the *most respectable* circles.

Mr. Gurney. Have you had an opportunity of forming an opinion of Mr. O'Connor's character and principles?

A. I have the *highest opinion* of Mr. O'Connor's CHARACTER.

Q. Have you been enabled to form a judgment of his political opinions?

A. I always understood, both from his conversation and from others, who were perhaps more acquainted with him than I was myself, that he entertained THE SAME POLITICAL SENTIMENTS AS EVERY ONE of the OPPOSITION.

Q. Have you ever observed any change in those principles?—*A.* NEVER.

Q. Has your Lordship ever observed any opinion or principle of Mr. O'Connor that could lead you to suppose he had a wish that this country should be invaded by the French?—*A.* NEVER.

The Right Hon. the Earl of OXFORD. (Sworn).

Examined by Mr. PLUMER.

Q. Whether your Lordship is acquainted with Mr. O'Connor?—*A.* PERFECTLY.

Q. What is the character of Mr. O'Connor?

A. That of a PERFECTLY loyal Man.

Q. Was he a person much attached to his friends, or the contrary?—*A.* PERFECTLY attached to his friends.

Q. Have you ever observed any marks of duplicity or reserve constituting his character?

A. DIRECTLY the contrary.

Q. Did you ever observe the least appearance of his having any disposition favourable to the French?

A. No, DIRECTLY the contrary.

SAMUEL WHITBREAD, Esq. (Sworn).

Examined by Mr. GURNEY.

Q. Are you acquainted with Mr. O'Connor? *A.* I am.

Q. How long have you been so?

A. I became acquainted with Mr. O'Connor in the beginning of the year 1796.

Q. Has your acquaintance with him enabled you to form a judgment of his character and principles?

A. I think it has.

Q. Be so good as state what they are?

A. I think Mr. O'Connor to be a man of amiable manners in private, and of an honourable and independent mind; his public principles appeared to me to be THE SAME AS MY OWN; from the conversation that I have had with him, and from those which he has had with other persons when I have been present, I collected that he was

a friend to the constitution of this country, that he saw the existence of abuses as I did, and wished a reformation of those abuses, by the means of Parliament.

Q. Whether you ever heard any thing of Mr. O'Connor which could lead you to suppose that he could wish for an invasion of this country by the French?

A. *Quite the contrary.*

Mr. Plumer. We have some more witnesses, but I could wish to save your Lordship the trouble; my learned friends know, I believe, that there are several other gentlemen attending.

Mr. Garrow. Your saying it is enough, Mr. Plumer.

Mr. Plumer. Mr. Grey, my Lord Lauderdale, and several other gentlemen attend to give *the same testimony.*

CHARACTER OF O'CONNOR, BY HIMSELF.

*Extract from the APPENDIX to the REPORT of the SECRET
COMMITTEE of the HOUSE OF COMMONS, on the IRISH
REBELLION. No. 31.*

Thursday, 9th August, 1798.

ARTHUR O'CONNOR, Esq. (Sworn.)

Q. When did you become an United Irishman?

A. About November 1796.

Q. When did the Military organization begin?

A. About the middle of 1796.

Q. Were you a Member of the National Executive?

A. I was, and continued so from November 1796, to January 1798.

Q. When did the communications with France commence?

A. Before I was an United Irishman; I believe in the middle of 1796, at the same time that the Military organization was formed.

Q. When was it agreed to accept the offer of assistance from France?

A. I understood it was accepted at a meeting of the Executive in Summer 1796. I was apprized of the offer and acceptance by my brother members of the Executive.

after I became a member of it, and before the arrival of the French in Bantry Bay.

Q. Was it the determination of the United Irishmen in the North to rise if the French had landed?

A. The Directory thought they would rise.

Q. When was the first communication from France after the expedition to Bantry Bay?

A. The first of my own knowledge I can speak of was in August 1797.—It stated, that a fleet lay in the Texel with 15,000 men on board, and that the armament was destined for Ireland. I was arrested and in confinement for some months before that time.

Q. Was it mentioned to the Irish Executive where the descent was intended?

A. It was not in the dispatch which I saw.

Q. Was there any intelligence brought of the intended invasion at Bantry?

A. There was; by a messenger who arrived here about November 1796.

Q. Was there a resident agent appointed to go to Paris in Spring 1797?

A. There was, whilst I was in prison; and a second person was sent in June following: I saw this person on his return to Ireland from France about November 1797. He reported that no armament was then ready; but that one would shortly be ready. I understood that when a French fleet was ready they would take place.

Q. Have you heard that there were some conversations on this subject between persons of this country and General Valence, prior to October 1796?

A. I have heard there were; they did not, however, lead to any thing decisive.

Q. Was there any connection with the English or Scotch societies?

A. Any connection with them was merely between individuals; the Irish Executive wished to keep clear of them.

Q. Do you know of any loan being negotiated with France or Spain?

A. Instructions were given to the agent to negotiate a loan of half a million in France or Spain, on the security of the new Irish government. Says, his situation in the Executive was filled up when he left Ireland in January last.

The evidence of Dr. M'Nevin together with that of two other members of the Executive, namely, Mr. Emmet and Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, DELIVERED UPON OATH before the said Secret Committee of the Lords, and who as well as the said Dr. M'Nevin have been examined since before your Committee, has completely developed the connection of the party with the French Directory. From their testimony it appears that so early as the year 1796, the party, despairing of carrying their plans into execution through the medium of a democratic reform, avowedly directed their efforts to revolution, and having received an intimation from one of their society and whom your Committee have very good reason to know to be Mr. Theobald Wolfe Tone already mentioned, (a fugitive from this country on account of his treasonable conduct) then at Paris, that the state of the country had been represented to the government of France in such a light as to induce them to resolve on sending a force to Ireland for the purpose of enabling it to separate itself from Great Britain, an extraordinary meeting of the Executive of the Union was convened to take the proposal into consideration.

This meeting was held in the Summer of 1796, and the result of their deliberations was to accept of the assistance thus held out to them by the French Directory.

In consequence of this determination an agent was dispatched to the Directory to acquaint them with it. He was instructed to state the dispositions of the people, and the arrangements of the Union for their reception, and received fresh assurances from the French government that the armament should be sent as speedily as it could be prepared. The agent above alluded to appears to your Committee from various channels of information to have been the late Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who, *accompanied by the said Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR*, proceeded by *Hamburg* to Switzerland, and had an interview near the French frontier with General Hoche, who afterwards had the command of the expedition against Ireland, on which occasion every thing was settled between the parties with a view to the descent. The reason the persons employed on this mission did not pass into France was, lest the Irish government should gain intelligence of the fact, and cause them to be apprehended on their return.

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